

SAFER Combustible Dust Advisor Guidelines

Combustible Dust Management Training Procedural Outline For Sawmill Operations

Abstract

The purpose of this outline is to provide a framework for how SAFER Combustible Dust Advisors will approach a combustible dust management training session. The outline will illustrate how the training session will be structured and will expand on each component part of both the training and the plant combustible dust assessment. It is intended that the SAFER Combustible Dust Advisor will use this outline as a road map to conduct an effective combustible dust management training session.

Pre-Visit Contact

The SAFER Combustible Dust Advisor will contact the lumber manufacturing operation prior to visiting the plant. Using prior information, contact the operations manager or human resources professional and after introducing yourself, offer a background snapshot of the SAFER Combustible Dust Pilot Project purpose, and the role that the SAFER Combustible Dust Advisor. Briefly indicate how the Joint Health and Safety is expected to be involved and advise that more detail will be provided during an introductory meeting. Be sure to confirm a date and time for the tour, and that you will require at least two Joint Health & Safety Committee members to accompany you – a union representative from the Joint Health & Safety Committee and a management representative from the Joint Health & Safety Committee.

Combustible Dust Management Training Session

This training session will take place prior to the plant combustible dust assessment and will be used to explain the purpose of the SAFER Combustible Dust Pilot Project. This training session should be attended by as many Joint Health & Safety Committee members as possible, and the operations manager or human resources professional – whichever was contacted prior to the visit. Use this time to receive your safety orientation and abide by any cellphone usage policy requirements.

The speaking points listed below should be covered during this training session. Be sure to touch on the following:

1. **How and why the SAFER Combustible Dust Pilot Project was created** – *during 2013 BC Interior and 2014 WFP collective bargaining, the negotiating parties recognized an opportunity to further involve employees – USW members – in efforts to control combustible dust in the workplace.*
2. **Explain the purpose of the SAFER Combustible Dust Pilot Project** – *promoting awareness and compliance of the evolving dust standards for the purpose of enhancing safety and productivity*
3. **Why it's necessary to involve the Joint Health & Safety Committee** – *involvement during inspections will enhance their knowledge base on combustible dust and will promote a sense of meaningful participation*
4. **Explain the difference between a combustible dust management assessment and a regulatory compliance inspection** – *combustible dust management assessment relates to how the task of cleaning up the operation is managed and its effectiveness, whereas a regulatory compliance inspection relates to adherence to WorkSafeBC regulations; will not be performing a regulatory compliance inspection*
5. **Touch on the Fire Inspection & Prevention Initiative** – *urge Joint Health & Safety to become familiar with the resources offered by FIPI such as the science behind combustible dust explosions; distribute Handout No.1 – FIPI Resource material and provide overview of content*
6. **Bring attention to the seriousness of the controlling combustible dust** – *since the 2012 dust explosions in the northern interior, combustible dust is on everyone's radar and the BC Forest Industry is taking it seriously and so have their employees mostly represented by the United Steelworkers (USW). Joint Health & Safety Committee can play an important part if provided awareness of combustible dust management tools*
7. **Management of change process important** – *A management of change policy should be implemented in all lumber manufacturing operations handling combustible dust and the policy should be fully understood by the Joint Health & Safety Committee; the goal is to ensure that no change occurs that could increase the severity or consequence of an existing dust hazard, or a dust hazard is introduced where none existed previously; distribute Handout No.2 – Management of Change Resource material and provide overview of content*
8. **Post-Assessment Meeting Required** – *provide awareness that a meeting will be necessary immediately after the combustible dust management assessment which will both allow you to talk about what was observed during the assessment and will give the Joint Health & Safety Committee members a chance to sound off*

PPE & Gear Check

Before beginning your combustible dust management assessment and prior to entering the lumber manufacturing plant, review the tools required to conduct your assessment. Ensure that standard personal protective equipment is being worn – hardhat, safety glasses, steel-toed boots, hi-vis vest, hearing protection, gloves – and that you carry a quality flashlight, digital camera, measuring tape, and

notebook. To reduce the risk of losing or dropping your tools during the tour, consider attaching adjustable lanyards to your flashlight and digital camera that you can tighten around your wrist.

Combustible Dust Management Assessment

Lead the visit to the plant by briefly explaining how you will be conducting the assessment. Invite a Joint Health & Safety Committee member that is familiar with the area being assessed to safety guide you around and that they should stay close. Be sure to keep in mind that you will – in a sense – be coaching the accompanying Health & Safety Committee members on your observational procedures just as if you were training a new SAFER Combustible Dust Advisor.

During your walk to the sawmill, observe your surroundings and determine if any out buildings adjacent to the lumber manufacturing operation need to be included. (i.e. – maintenance shops, mobile equipment garages, equipment storage sheds) Decide in what order these buildings will be assessed and make a note in your notebook.

Begin the assessment at the ground level in the building structure that you choose. Conduct your observations in an organized manner by following the SAFER Combustible Dust Management Assessment Matrix For Sawmill Operation. Be sure to document both hazardous instances of primary and/or secondary combustible dust and good cleanup practices – use your digital camera to record what you choose to highlight. Make a mental note of the route through the operation as you will likely be speaking to your photos in that order.

Move at a pace that allows for full coverage of the assessment area in a timely manner yet leaves time to make enquiries to the Joint Health & Safety Committee members on cleanup issues and concerns, and time to complement the Health & Safety Committee when good cleanup practices are encountered. (i.e. passive shielding of MCC units, clean floors, or absence of duct on sprinkler pipes) Pay careful attention to hazardous instances of primary and/or secondary combustible dust on or around possible ignition sources.

At any time during the tour, feel free to stop and find a quiet location if you sense that your Health & Safety Committee members need a break and/or need some time to clarify how you are proceeding. Sometimes in a large sawmill operations, it may be necessary to stop and regroup and take a breath or find refreshments before moving on. It's alright to review any safety orientation concerns or any safety issues related to how the tour is being conducted before moving on – as always, consider yourself a guest and adhere to their safety policies.

Post-Assessment Meeting

Once the assessment has been completed, find a quiet location to talk about what you have observed. Be prepared to speak to your digital photos and use your notes to frame your feedback in a way that doesn't point fingers. (i.e. is your system for cleaning combustible dust meeting your needs?... What is frequency because there was accumulations of dust found in such-n-such a place)

For optimal viewing of digital photos, use a projector or laptop if available. This electronic medium will allow for all present at the meeting to view the photos together. Viewing photos together will create a more dynamic dialogue and foster a more effective discussion.

Be prepared to wrap-up the visit by returning to the purpose points made during the initial training session meeting. Thank the Joint Health & Safety Committee and management personnel and leave behind enough SAFER Combustible Dust Advisor pamphlets for everyone attending the training. Be sure to leave them your SAFER business card and review how they may contact you should any questions arise when you are gone.

Documenting the Combustible Dust Management Assessment

A formal report of assessment observations to SAFER is not required. However, a record of where and when the assessment took place is necessary and this is done by filling out a SAFER Combustible Dust Management Assessment Form. Fill out the SAFER Combustible Dust Management Assessment Form completely and be sure to complete the company name and division/location; date and time; names of those present at the training session meeting and those who accompanied you on the plant assessment; and add comments in the space provided. Be sure to write in who the main contact person was at the plant for future reference and make a note if any follow-up action is required. (i.e. – forward digital photos by email, questions that were asked and you didn't know the answer) Submit the form to the SAFER Council and retain the completed form for your records.

The plant assessment is not complete without sending a follow-up email within a week of the visit to thank the company for their participation in the SAFER Combustible Dust Management Assessment. Ensure that your contact information accompanies this follow-up email.